

could do with the big guns. But such a contest, however interesting it would have been to those taking part, would cost some £300, which those in authority hold to be too long a price to pay for an inter-company contest. But the officers, non-coms., and men had put up £150 in their anxiety to prove Auckland first in gunnery. Now there will be no contest. Instead, the men were ordered back to Auckland, booking their passages by the Main Trunk express to-day. They are naturally disappointed, for they felt when they arrived that the preliminary arrangements for the match were all in order, otherwise they would not have paid their own expenses to Wellington.

Colonel Robin, C.B., Chief of the General Staff, expressed himself as astonished at the enterprise. No application for permission for the Auckland contingent to visit Wellington had been received by the proper authority. He could not imagine what the Auckland officers and men were thinking about to undertake a contest of this sort without first obtaining the requisite permission.

APPENDIX No. 4.

[Extract from the *Evening Post*, Wellington, of 1st November, 1909.]

AUCKLAND GUNNERS.—“A GROSS INSULT TO THE MEN.”—CAPTAIN KNYVETT’S STATEMENT.

Captain Knyvett, officer in charge of the sixty gunners from the Auckland Garrison Artillery Volunteers, was seen by a *Post* reporter to-day with reference to the report that his men had walked into the training-camp of the Petone Navals at Fort Kelburne without notice and in defiance of the rules and regulations. Captain Knyvett characterised the statements made as “a gross insult to the Auckland Garrison Artillery.” He added that the Aucklanders came as the result of several pressing invitations. At the Easter manœuvres in Auckland there were several of the Petone Naval officers present, and it was then proposed that the Auckland men should come down to Wellington on the first opportunity offering, and see the crack Petone corps, which had so often managed to beat the Auckland corps, at work. It was decided then that the Aucklanders should visit their Petone rivals on the first occasion that they went into camp. Six weeks ago Captain Knyvett wrote to Captain Ellis, asking would it be convenient for the Auckland men to come down for this encampment. A reply was sent back that the Petone Navals would be delighted to welcome the Aucklanders. An effort was then made to secure railway-passes for the visiting men, but without avail. Not to disappoint them, however, it was decided that the gunners should put in 10s. per man towards expenses, and the two officers made up the remaining £98 between them.

On Tuesday night they telegraphed to Petone officers, asking if they were still ready to receive them, and a telegram was sent back by Captain Ellis to the effect that his corps would be delighted to receive the visitors. A letter was also sent to Colonel Robin, asking could the men travel from Auckland in uniform; but no reply was received.

A Petone Welcome.

On arrival the visitors were met by two Petone Naval officers, and were informed that no arrangements had been made to meet them because Colonel Robin had informed them that the Auckland men had not been able to make arrangements to come, as the Department had refused to issue railway-passes. “The Petone Navals put us up, and treated us splendidly,” said Captain Knyvett; “but the statements published are fabrications. We did not come down to knock the crack gunnery corps ‘kite high in a big gun shot,’ as published, and we did not come unknown to the Petone Navals. We had no thought of a gunnery competition, but came to study the conditions under which the Petone men work, and to see why they have been able to beat us. We are quite satisfied. The Petone Navals possess a thoroughly up-to-date equipment, while ours is antique and will not bear comparison. But we have profited by our visit, and enjoyed it, despite the published statement that we go home sorely disappointed.”

APPENDIX No. 5.

[Extract from the *Dominion*, Wellington, of 2nd November, 1909.]

AUCKLAND GUNNERS.—VISIT TO FORT KELBURNE.—STATEMENT BY CAPTAIN KNYVETT.—MATTERS DECIDEDLY MIXED.

From further inquiries which have been made by a *Dominion* representative concerning the surprise visit paid to the Petone Navals’ training-camp at Fort Kelburne by a half-company of Auckland Garrison Artillery Volunteers under Captain Knyvett on Saturday last, and the unfortunate position in which the visitors found themselves, there appears to be very little doubt that some one, who it is not clear, has blundered rather badly. Matters are decidedly mixed at present, and from the multitude of conflicting statements it is somewhat difficult to arrive at the real truth of the matter. One thing appears to be certain, some one in Auckland “left undone the things he ought to have done.” But let the statements hereunder speak for themselves.